

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BANGKO 10310 121130Z

ACTION CU-04

INFO OCT-01 EA-09 ISO-00 /014 W

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R 120949Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO USIA WASHDC

INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU

SECSTATE WASHDC 2064

UNCLAS BANGKOK 10310

USIAC

FOR IEA AND ICS/D, CINCPAC FOR USIA ADVISOR, STATE FOR CU/EA

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJ: WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS--MAY 5, AMY 12, 1977

MEDIA CONCERNS:

1. HEADLINES: DOMESTIC NEWS DOMINATED THE BANGKOK PRESS, CENTERING ON SHIFTS IN LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, INSURGENCY OPERATIONS AND SENTENCING OF THE MARCH 26 COUP PLOTTERS. MEDIA GAVE ROUTINE COVERAGE TO EUROPEAN SUMMIT, WITH NO SIGNIFICANT COMMENT. INITIAL HARSH REACTION TO REPORT S

OF US CONGRESS CUTTING MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO THAILAND (SEE BANGKOK 9943) DID NOT CONTINUE. ARMY CHIEF GENERAL SERM'S COMMENT THAT ACTION NOT FINAL CARRIED IN ONLY TWO CHINESE NEWSPAPERS.

2. COUP PLOTTER SENTENCED: TWENTY PEOPLE IMPLICATED IN THE MARCH 26 COUP ATTEMPT WERE GIVEN STIFF JAIL SENTENCES UNDER ARTICLE 21 WITHOUT TRIAL OR PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF SPECIFIC CRIMES. SENTENCES FOR MEDIA PERSONS: SOMPOJ PIYA-OUEI, EDITOR-DIRECTOR CHAO THAI NEWSPAPER AND STILL AT LARGE, LIFE; PICHAI VASANASONG, TV PERSONALITY AND CHAO THAI COLUMNIST, 20 YEARS; SOMBOON SAPPOKPOON AND SIRA DIRAPA UNCLASSIFIED

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MANAGING EDITOR AND DEPUTY CHAO THAI EDITOR, 15; RAKSAK WATANAPANIJ, PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT HEAD, 10; SOMCHAI RUERKDI, DAILY NEWS COLUMNIST, 10; AND VIRA MUKSIPAPONG, FORMER NATIONAL ASSEMBLY MEMBER AND CHAO THAI COLUMNIST, 5.

3. RTG TIGHTENS CONTROLS OVER PRESS AND FILMS:

A NEW BILL BEFORE THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY WILL REQUIRE REGISTRATION WITH MINISTRY OF INTERIOR OF MASS MEDIA PERSONNEL, INCLUDING REPORTERS, EDITORS AND OWNERS. IT ALSO PROVIDES FOR WARNINGS, SUSPENSION, FINES, AND ONE YEAR IMPRISONMENT FOR "FALSE REPORTS," AND WOULD REQUIRE MEDIA TO PRINT CORRECTIONS AS PROMINENTLY AS THE OFFENDING ARTICLE.

THE FILM BILL PROVIDES UP TO THREE YEARS IN JAIL AND \$1,500 FINE FOR CINEMA OPERATORS WHO SHOW FILMS NOT APPROVED BY THE RTG CENSORSHIP BOARD, AND LESSER PUNISHMENT FOR PERSONS PRODUCING FILMS OR ADVERTISING WITHOUT PERMISSION.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:

4. STUDENT ORIENTATION: PROGRAM ASSISTANT POONSANG SUTABUTR, RESPONSIBLE FOR POST STUDENT COUNSELING ACTIVITIES, PRESENTED BANGKOK -BANK-SPONSORED STUDENT ORIENTATION PROGRAM MAY 13. MORE THAN 200 PERSONS ATTENDED TWO-HOURS SESSION, INCLUDING UNDERGRADUATES AND GRADUATE STUDENTS WHO ANTICIPATE US STUDY AND ABOUT 25 PARENTS. KHUN POONSANG'S PRESENTATIONS COVER US DEDCATION SYSTEM, FACILITIES, CAMPUS LIFE, CLASSROOM ATMOSPHERE AND ACADEMIC CALENDAR. SINCE PARENTS' ATTITUDES ARE IMPORTANT FACTOR IN STUDENT PERFORMANCE, POST WELCOMES AND WILL ENCOURAGE GRATER PARENT PARTICIPATION IN FURTURE PROGRAMS.

5. KHONKAEN VTR REPORT: KHONKAEN BRANCH POST/REPORTS THAT, SINCE INSTALLATION OF LIBRARY VTR EQUIPMENT, REQUESTS FOR IN-HOUSE VTR USE INCREASED FROM "A FEW" IN FEBRUARY TO 60 IN MARCH AND 140 IN APRIL.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Disposition Remarks:
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Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
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Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
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Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
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TAGS: SOPN, TH
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Type: TE
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Review Markings:
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